

# School Uniforms and Subsequent Later-Life Outcomes

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This paper estimates the causal effects of childhood experiences of wearing school uniforms at the public elementary school on behavioral and labor market outcomes in adulthood. The school uniforms experience can be endogenous if the preferences and characteristics of school and parents are involved with the decision of schools to implement school uniforms. In the post-war period, the Japanese government focused on the retail apparel industry that could serve as catalysts to stimulate the economy, and we exploit the exogenous variation in the expansion of retail apparel industry across regions where each respondent lived at age 6 that leads to a prefectural difference in adopting school uniforms. We find a distinct difference by gender. An experience of wearing school uniforms in childhood affects personality traits, only for women. Those who wore school uniforms at their public elementary school are less likely to be extraverted, conscientious and open to new experiences. The related literature provides some evidence indicating that female school children have higher level of self-perceptions and awareness of how they dress, which could explain why school uniforms largely affect the formulation of personality traits of women. In contrast, for men, we find that an experience of wearing school uniforms increases the negative reciprocal behavior and reduces their annual income. We discuss the possible link between childhood experience and the subsequent later labor market outcome through the moderating effect of behavioral outcomes.

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